

NORTH WHITEHAWK

IDEAS PRESENTATION - YOUR PLACE, YOUR FUTURE

7567-ECE-DO-02 REV B

APRIL 2025



NORTH WHITEHAWK

SITE CORNER TO HERON COURT



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Brighton and Hove Council

New Homes For Neighborhoods

At Brighton Council we are committed to delivering high-quality, sustainable new homes that enhance our neighbourhoods and meet the evolving needs of our communities. Through the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme, we are transforming underutilised sites into well-designed, energy-efficient housing that contributes positively to the local area. Our approach prioritises thoughtful placemaking, strong community connections, and long-term sustainability, ensuring that each development not only provides much-needed homes but also enriches the wider environment.

By working collaboratively with architects, planners, and local stakeholders, we aim to create places where people want to live—balancing design excellence with affordability, accessibility, and environmental responsibility. These Idea documents outline our aspirations for the future, setting a clear framework for how we intend to shape thriving, inclusive communities across our city.

ECE Architecture

ECE is a 115 strong Architect and Town Planning AJ100 practice with studios in London, Sussex, and Bristol, specialising in Residential, Education, Commercial, Civic & Healthcare sectors.

Our expertise and enthusiasm is applied in partnership with our clients to provide innovative and sustainable solutions to all stages of the development process.

We aspire to the highest quality of design and service to our clients and the wider communities in which our projects are delivered.

We are proud to have won several awards for our buildings including RIBA Awards, Civic Trust Awards, an Iconic Award and a range of Regional Design Awards.

Design Team / Consultants

Ridge and Partners LLP -
Multidisciplinary Consultant (Access and Transport, Utilities, Environmental, Topographical).

B&M
Quantity Surveying

Savills
Valuation and Surveying

Project Centre
Highways

Anderson Acoustics
Air Quality

Lizard Landscape Design & Ecology
Landscape, Ecology, BNG

Archaeological Services Ltd
Archaeology

Anstey Horne
Daylight / Sunlight

Nova Acoustics
Noise

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Summary

This document has been prepared on behalf of Brighton Council, the landowner, to outline the ideas and objectives for the development plans for North Whitehawk. The Site is a strategically important development proposal in the east suburb of Brighton.

The primary goals of this Ideas Document are as follows:

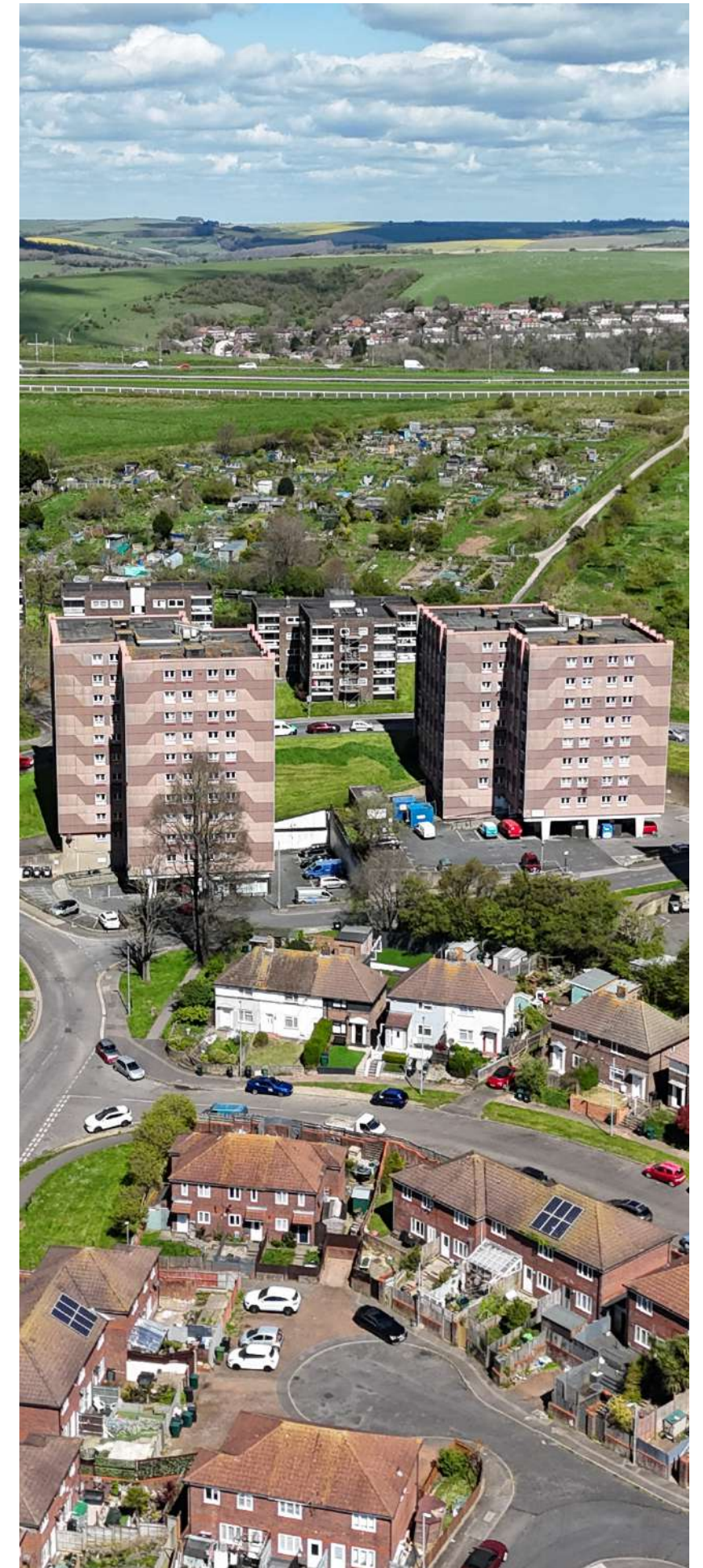
- 01 Present a comprehensive idea setting out key objectives and placemaking principles.**
- 02 Provide a summary of the Site and its local context analysis conducted to date.**
- 03 Development potential of the Site within the context of current Planning Policy.**
- 04 Introduce an initial concept proposal for the Site and illustrate how it has been influenced by the idea and site assessment.**
- 05 Discuss the next steps in fulfilling the ideas for the Site.**
- 06 This document outlines the new site proposal, which includes completely removing the existing building following feedback from the structural engineer.**

THE IDEA

1.2. The Idea

The idea for North Whitehawk is structured into three parts; A Clear Idea, Key Objectives and Placemaking Principles, not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive, but rather a guide to offering a thriving, sustainable new community for Whitehawk.

- Connectivity to the wider city prioritising the enhancement of pedestrian and cycling routes and utilising the existing public transport routes effectively. Feedback from residents in this area suggests there is a feeling of being “shut-off” from the wider city infrastructure is creating a feeling of isolation.
- Designing an attractive and high-quality environment which incorporates green spaces, trees, street furniture and street lighting. Avoiding large swathes of car parking, bin storage and unattractive tarmacked areas.
- Incorporating new and enhancing existing playground facilities and functional spaces to allow people to socialise freely and safely. Consider safety and accessibility of new pedestrian routes and road layouts to allow all users to access local amenities including families with young children, wheelchair users and others.
- Avoid areas of undefined or underused areas of land that do not enhance the setting or provide a functional purpose
- Build in opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and surface water management such as swales and SUDS throughout the design.
- Design parking to be unobtrusive and to avoid dominance in the street scene. Consider opportunities to reduce the reliance upon private cars within the community.
- Maximise existing views from the community orchard, Whitehawk Hill and consider the positioning and height of new buildings to allow natural light and key views to remain in situ.



Key objectives for North Whitehawk are set out below:



- 1** Stitch Swanborough Drive seamlessly with the neighbouring areas, creating a robust connection with the established environment and local communities.
- “Innovative, Sustainable, Resilient: Shaping Hollingdean’s Net-Zero Future”**
- “Nature and Design United: Creating Eco-Friendly Spaces for Hollingdean’s Residents”**



- 3** Establish a new destination and neighbourhood for Whitehawk. It will be a welcoming place for both current and prospective residents.
- “Redefining Sustainability: Net-Zero Homes, Thriving Communities”**
- “Greening Brighton: Connecting Nature, Communities, and a Sustainable Future”**



- 2** To let the current context and distinctive character of Whitehawk guide the idea. Embrace the past while planning for the future.
- “Green Homes, Strong Communities: Designed to create unique character”**
- “Character at Hollingdean’s Core: Creating Eco-Friendly Spaces for Brighton’s Future”**



- 4** To advocate a sustainable lifestyle in the heart of Whitehawk, fostering immediate positive transformation while safeguarding existing communities for the future.
- Building a Greener Future: Sustainable, Energy-Efficient Homes for All”**
- “Sustainable Green Spaces: Fostering Biodiversity and Connection for All”**

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

2.1. The Site

The Site is situated in the suburb of Whitehawk eastern part of Brighton, situated in the south of Bevendean and north of Brighton Marina.

Swanborough in Whitehawk, Brighton, is well-connected to both local and wider areas, making it an accessible part of the city.

The Swanborough Flats are centrally located, with good transport links to key parts of Brighton, including the city center, which is just a short drive or bus ride away. Whitehawk itself is home to notable sites like the historic Whitehawk Camp, a prehistoric archaeological site offering a glimpse into the area’s ancient past.

The nearby Racehill Community Orchard, a local project that promotes sustainability and community engagement, is a popular space for residents. Additionally, the area is close to East Brighton Park, which features open green spaces for recreation and events. Swanborough’s location provides a mix of residential convenience and proximity to both cultural and natural attractions, offering a sense of community while remaining connected to the broader city.

Distances to local amenities and places of interest:

- Race Hill Community Orchard (2 minute walk)
- Brighton Racecourse (14 minute walk)
- Brighton General Hospital (12 minute walk)
- Brighton Met, East Campus (16 minute walk)
- City Academy Whitehawk (11 minute walk)
- Whitehawk Library (12 minute walk)
- East Brighton Nature Reserve (9 minute walk)
- Premier, Mulberrys (8 minute walk)
- Whitehawk Hill Local Nature Reserve (11 minute walk)
- Whitehawk Camp (17 minute Walk)

“Whitehawk is a suburb located in the eastern part of Brighton, England, situated in a dry valley historically known as Whitehawk Bottom. The area was developed into a large housing estate by the local council between 1933 and 1937, comprising nearly 1,200 residences. In 1967, the Swanborough flats, a series of high-rise buildings, were added to the northern end of the estate. Subsequent redevelopment in the 1970s and 1980s introduced cul-de-sacs and increased the number of houses, reshaping the area’s layout. “



AMENITIES & CONNECTIVITY

-  TRAIN STATION
-  BUS STOP
-  SPORTS / LEISURE
-  RECREATION / GREEN SPACE
-  EDUCATIONAL
-  RETAIL
-  PLACES OF INTEREST
-  RESTAURANTS
-  HOSPITAL / HEALTHCARE

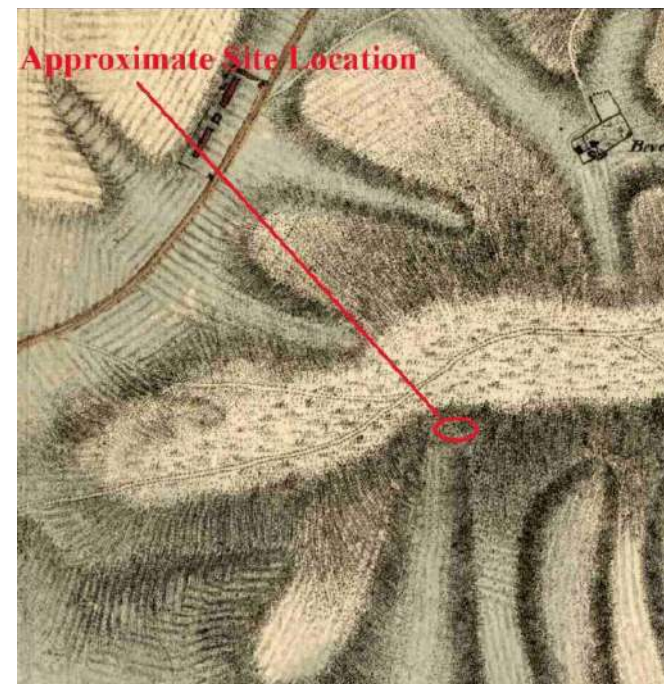


2.2. Heritage

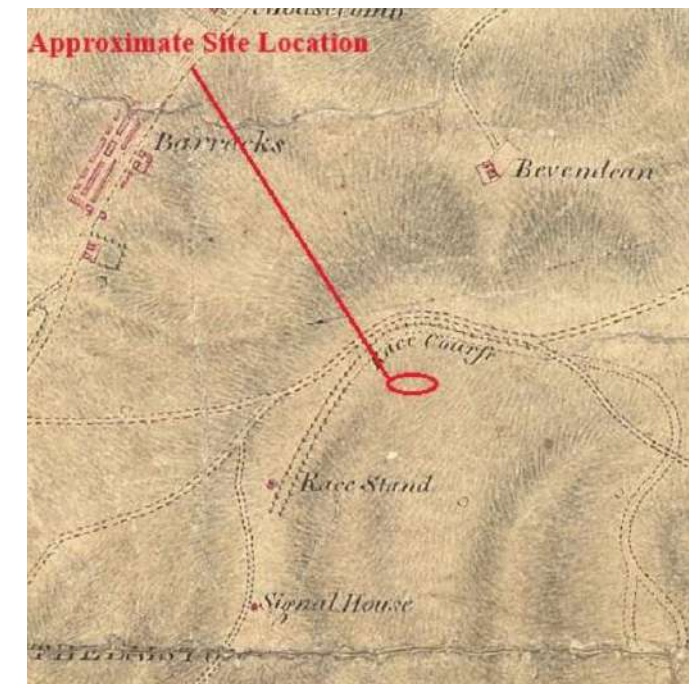
Whitehawk, Brighton, has a rich heritage blending prehistoric, historical, and modern elements. It is home to Whitehawk Camp, a Neolithic site over 5,500 years old, significant for its ceremonial and communal role.

In the medieval period, Whitehawk remained rural but began to develop in the 19th and 20th centuries, with significant residential expansion in the 1930s and 1960s, including the construction of the Swanborough Flats.

Despite facing economic challenges as one of the most deprived areas in the UK, Whitehawk has seen revitalization through community-driven projects like the Racehill Community Orchard, promoting sustainability and local pride.



Yeakell and Gardiner's map of Sussex, (1783)



Ordnance Survey, Whitehawk, (1797)



The area also boasts a strong sporting heritage, with Whitehawk F.C., founded in 1945, serving as a key symbol of community identity.

Efforts to preserve Whitehawk's heritage continue, balancing its rich historical roots with modern growth and local engagement



Whitehawk view to Brighton Racecourse, (1937)

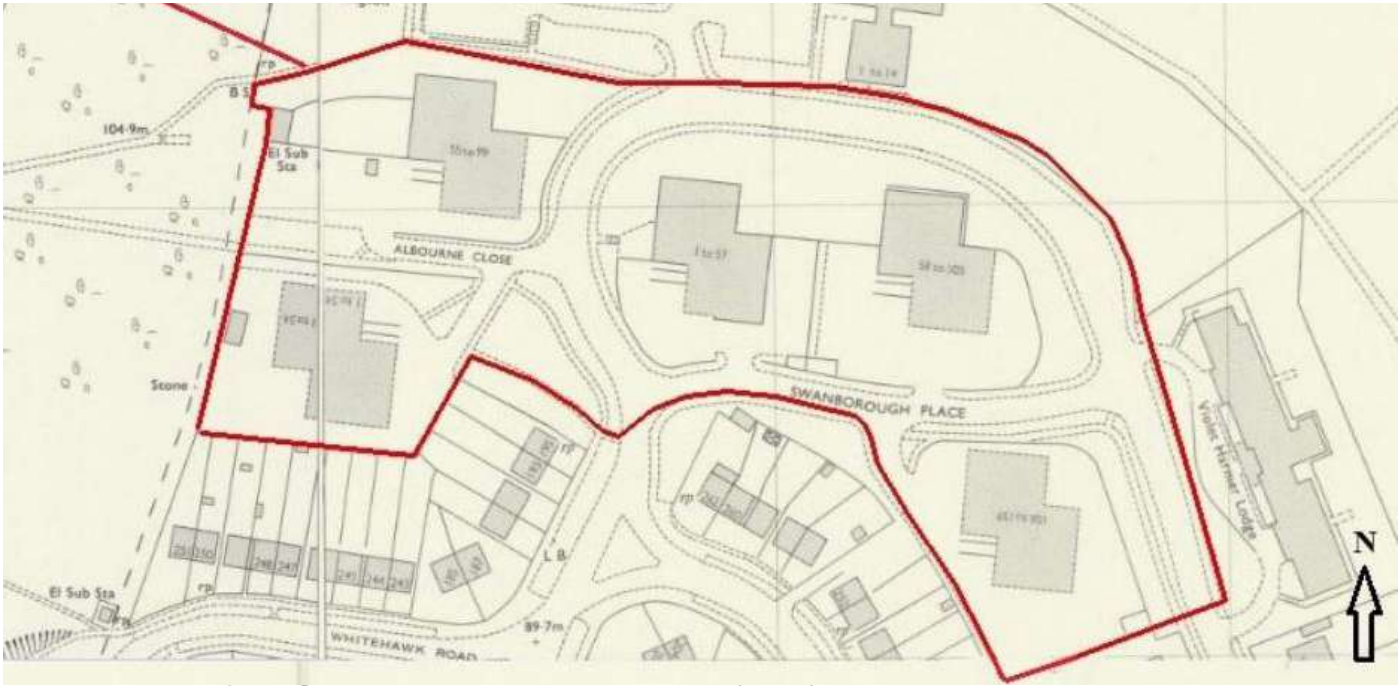


Bristol Gate Flats in the distance, (1962)

The Site



Early Housing developments on the site, (1954)



Development of the Swanborough Flat Whitehawk, (1974)



Whitehawk developments, (1976)



Swanborough Flats built in 1976



Swanborough Flats built in 1976

2.4. Character

The character of north Whitehawk, Brighton, is shaped by its mid-20th-century architecture, social history, and evolving community spirit.

The LPS apartment blocks, built in 1967, embody the utilitarian design typical of post-war public housing, reflecting the era's focus on affordable, high-density living. Over time, the area became associated with economic hardship, but its residents have fostered a strong sense of community through activism and mutual support.

Despite facing challenges such as social deprivation, the area's cultural diversity and local initiatives, like the Racehill Community Orchard and the allotments highlight efforts to improve living conditions and build a more inclusive, environmentally conscious environment.

Recent regeneration projects further reflect the area's ongoing transformation, balancing its historical significance with aspirations for a more sustainable and livable future.

The resilience and solidarity of its residents remain central to the area's character, showcasing their determination to overcome adversity and improve their neighbourhood.



Swallow Court



Swanborough Drive Apartments - in Planning



Racehill Orchards



Path leading from Racehill allotments

2.5. Existing Building Audit

KEY

Site Area: 20176sqm - 2.017 Hectares

Hard Surface - 10549sqm

Green space - 6677sqm

Existing Building Footprint

- Kingsfisher Court: 590sqm
- Falcon Court: 590sqm
- Kestrel Court: 590sqm
- Heron Court: 590sqm
- Swallow Court: 590sqm

Accommodation Schedule

- 1 Bed Units: 1 Unit
- 2 Bed Units: 260 Units

Commercial Spaces

- Kingsfisher Court: N/A
- Falcon Court: N/A
- Kestrel Court: 98sqm
- Heron Court: N/A
- Swallow Court: N/A

Residents Car Parking Spaces

- Kingsfisher Court: 22 Spaces including 2 visitor spaces
- Falcon Court: 41 Spaces including 4 visitor spaces
- Kestrel Court: 26 Spaces including 2 visitor spaces
- Heron Court: 34 Spaces including 2 visitor spaces
- Swallow Court: 28 Spaces including 1 visitor space

Cycle Parking Spaces

- Kingsfisher Court: N/A
- Falcon Court: N/A
- Kestrel Court: N/A
- Heron Court: N/A
- Swallow Court: N/A

Refuse and recycling bins

- Kingsfisher Court bin store: 47sqm
- Falcon Court bin store: 47sqm
- Kestrel Court bin store: 26sqm
- Heron Court bin store: 47sqm
- Swallow Court bin store: 47sqm



Baseline Plan

3.2. Site Opportunities

Site opportunities for the site following site considerations are as follows:-

1. Provide similar unit number on site with a policy compliant mix of 1,2 and 3 beds
2. Existing height on site could be used to establish scale and mass precedent.
3. Opportunities to remove Swanborough Place and replace with a community landscape amenity.
4. All existing buildings to be removed and reuse existing infrastructure and slab plateaus.
5. Enhance connectivity, prioritising pedestrians and cycles
6. Landscape design to include opportunities of blue and green infrastructure incorporating amenity space for all age groups
7. Using the existing infrastructure topography and relocation parking to minimise unsightly hardscaping and on road parking
8. Maximise and enhance existing views from the north of the site when viewed from the community allotments and orchards.
9. BNG improvements over existing landscape conditions.
10. Potential to reuse materials from demolition of existing Flat Blocks



3.3. Landscape Framework

Key landscape objectives in working towards making Brighton a net zero carbon emissions borough whilst improving, enhancing and creating green infrastructure and spaces:

Landscape Ecology, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), Play Space & Amenity Features

- **Ecological Corridors & Habitat Networks:** Linking green spaces for wildlife movement with native plants and pollinator-friendly species.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):** Habitat creation, enhancement, and offsetting to increase biodiversity, including bird/bat boxes and insect hotels.
- **Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS):** Rain gardens, swales, and ponds to manage runoff and provide wetland habitats.
- **Diverse Planting:** Native trees, wildflower meadows, and varied vegetation supporting wildlife and improving soil health.
- **Green Roofs & Walls:** Extensive green roofs and living walls to reduce heat island effect and offer additional habitat.

- **Flood-resistant & Climate-Adaptive Landscaping:** Flood-tolerant plants and resilient designs for long-term ecological sustainability.
- **Community Engagement:** Educational spaces and community gardens to promote biodiversity awareness and involvement.
- **Water-Efficient Landscaping:** Rainwater harvesting and sustainable irrigation to maintain communal green spaces.
- **Play Space:** Safe, accessible play areas designed for children with natural elements, promoting outdoor activity and connection with nature.
- **Amenity Areas:** Shared spaces, such as gardens, seating areas, and recreational zones, designed for resident relaxation, social interaction, and community wellbeing.



3.4. Social Value

Sustainable Transport

Secure cycle storage and EV charging points.

Car club provision and good access to public transport.

Pedestrian-friendly layout.

Explore opportunities for local repair/share shops and community markets or swap events.

Social Sustainability

- Mix of tenures and adaptable homes.
- Shared gardens and community spaces.
- Resident engagement during design.

Community

- Food production in community gardens
- Space for community composting schemes
- Educational spaces and community gardens to promote biodiversity awareness and support involvement.
- Amenity Areas: Shared spaces, such as gardens, seating areas, and recreational zones, designed for resident relaxation, social interaction, and community wellbeing.
- Explore opportunities to host markets for local produce.

Wellbeing

- Play Space: Safe, accessible play areas designed for children with natural elements, promoting outdoor activity and connection with nature.

Governance and inclusion

- Form community consultation/management group
- Consideration of safety for vulnerable groups, good lighting, avoiding hidden corners where possible.
- Multiple exits to community space
- Use a range of visual languages in signage and design for those less comfortable with written English

In addition, ECE can support community engagement to develop programming and incubating of the resources needed to run a site to achieve framework objectives.



3.5. Sustainability Framework

Key sustainability objectives in working towards making Brighton a net zero carbon emissions City whilst improving, enhancing and creating green infrastructure and spaces:

Key Sustainability Features – New Residential Development, Kemptown

Energy & Carbon

- High-performance insulation and airtight construction.
- Triple glazing and MVHR for energy efficiency and comfort.
- Low-carbon heating (air/ground source heat pumps).
- On-site renewable energy via solar PV.
- Smart meters for energy monitoring.

Water Efficiency

- Low-flow taps, showers and dual-flush WCs.
- Rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling where feasible.
- Drought-resistant planting.

Biodiversity & Landscape

- Green roofs, living walls, and native planting.
- Bird/bat boxes and insect hotels.
- Sustainable drainage (SUDS) and permeable paving.

Materials & Construction

- Low embodied carbon and responsibly sourced materials.
- Prefabrication to reduce waste.
- Non-toxic, low-VOC finishes.

Sustainable Transport

- Secure cycle storage and EV charging points.
- Car club provision and good access to public transport.
- Pedestrian-friendly layout.

Social Sustainability

- Mix of tenures and adaptable homes.
- Shared gardens and community spaces.
- Resident engagement during design.

Climate Resilience

- Measures to mitigate overheating and flooding.
- Resilient planting and passive design strategies.

Standards & Certifications

- Designed to meet Future Homes Standard.
- Potential for Passivhaus or Home Quality Mark certification.
- Targeting net zero operational carbon.



4.0 PROPOSAL 1

4.1. Ground floor

- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed
- M4(3)

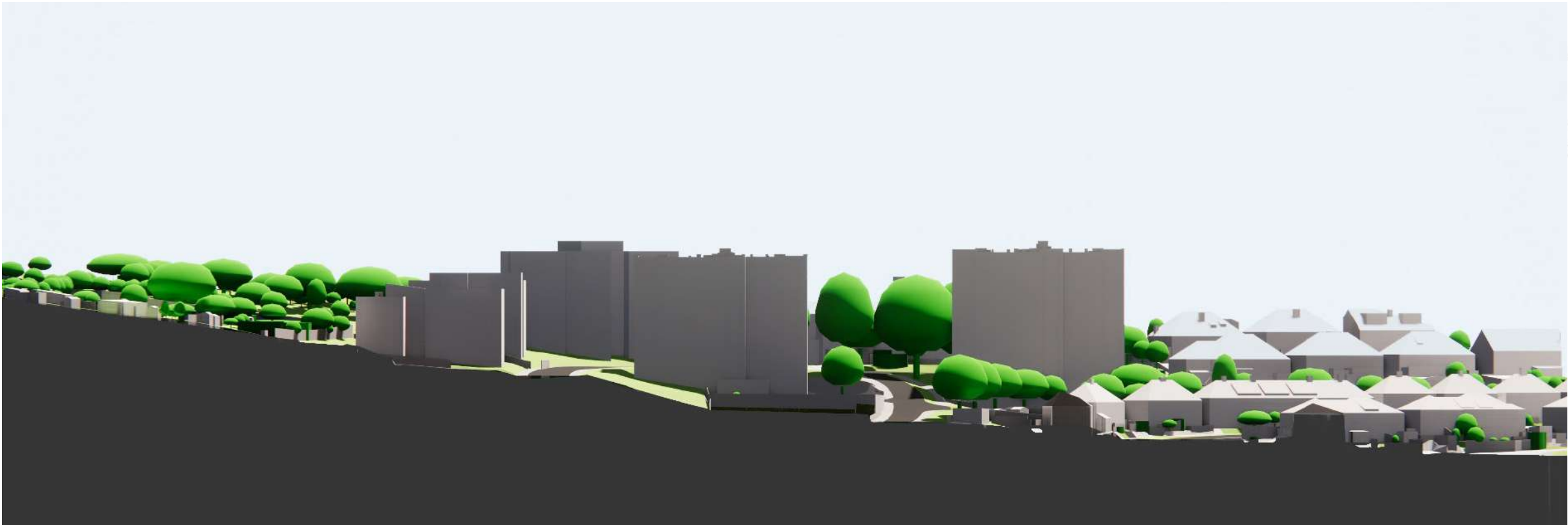


4.2. Proposal 1 - Typical floor

- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed
- M4(3) over Ground and 1st Floor



4.3. Section - Proposal 1



North South Section - Existing Buildings



North South Section - Proposal 1 Buildings

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4.4. View 1 - Proposal 1 Birdseye View



4.5. View 2 - Placemaking Parkland



4.6. Proposal 1 - Accommodation Schedule - 205 Units

	ECE Architecture							
	T 01903 248777 F 01903 248666 E sussex@eearchitecture.com W www.eearchitecture.com							
7567 - DO.04 North Whitehawk								
Schedule of Accommodation - Option 1								
Proposed Residential Accommodation Schedule								
Unit Type Schedule								
Floor	1BED m4(3) @55sqm+	1BED @50sqm+	2BED @61sqm+	2BED m4(3) @67sqm+	3BED @86sqm+	3BED m4(3) @94sqm+	Community Hub	TOTAL
Block 1 @ 4 storeys		4	6	5	3			18
Block 2 @ 6 storeys	1	7	12	2	6			28
Block 3 @ 4 storeys		7	6	2				15
Block 4 @ 8 storeys	2	10	12	1	6			31
Block 5 @ 9 storeys	1	10	16	2	10			39
Block 6 @ 9 storeys	3	9	18	3	11			44
Block 7 @ 6 storeys	1	8	12	1	8			30
Community Use							1	
Total	8	55	82	16	44	0		205
Percentage	4%	27%	40%	8%	21%	0%		100%

1 BED	31%
2 BED	48%
3 BED	21%
m4(3) - 20 UNITS	12%

Council brief (whitehawk)
1BED = 30%
2BED = 45%
3BED = 25%
M4(3) = 10%TOTAL

5.0 PROPOSAL 2

5.1. Ground floor

1 Bed

2 Bed

3 Bed

*

M4(3) Units
@ Ground - 5th Flr

Landscape improvements and creation of new place-making parkland destination



5.2. Proposal 2 - Typical upper floor

1 Bed

2 Bed

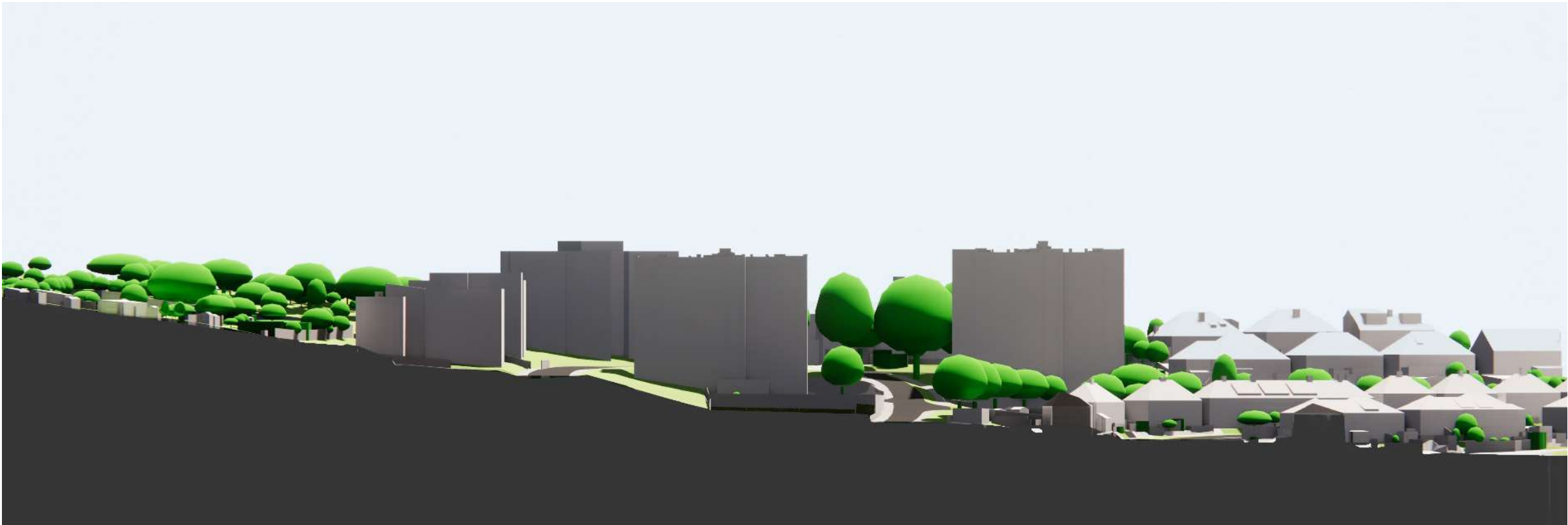
3 Bed

*

M4(3) Units
@ Ground - 5th Flr



5.3. Section Proposal 2



North South Section - Existing Buildings



North South Section - Proposal 2 Buildings

173

5.4. View 1 - Proposal 2 Birdseye View



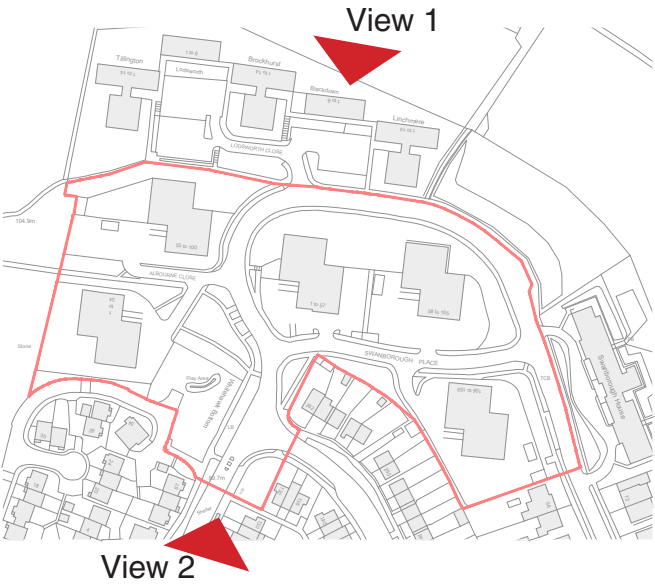
5.5. Proposal 2 - Accommodation Schedule - 261 Units

	ECE Architecture							
	T 01903 248777 F 01903 248666 E sussex@eearchitecture.com W www.eearchitecture.com							
7567 - DO.05 Swanborough Drive Whitehawk								
Schedule of Accommodation - Option 2								
Proposed Residential Accommodation Schedule								
Unit Type Schedule								
Floor	1BED m4(3) @55sqm+	1BED @50sqm+	2BED @61sqm+	2BED m4(3) @67sqm+	3BED @86sqm+	3BED m4(3) @94sqm+	Community Hub	TOTAL
Block 1		16	24	2	11			53
Block 2		8	8					16
Block 3		20	9	20	13			62
Block 4		24	30	2	16			72
Block 5		20	24	2	12			58
Community Use							1	
Total	0	88	95	26	52	0		261
Percentage	0%	34%	36%	10%	20%	0%		100%

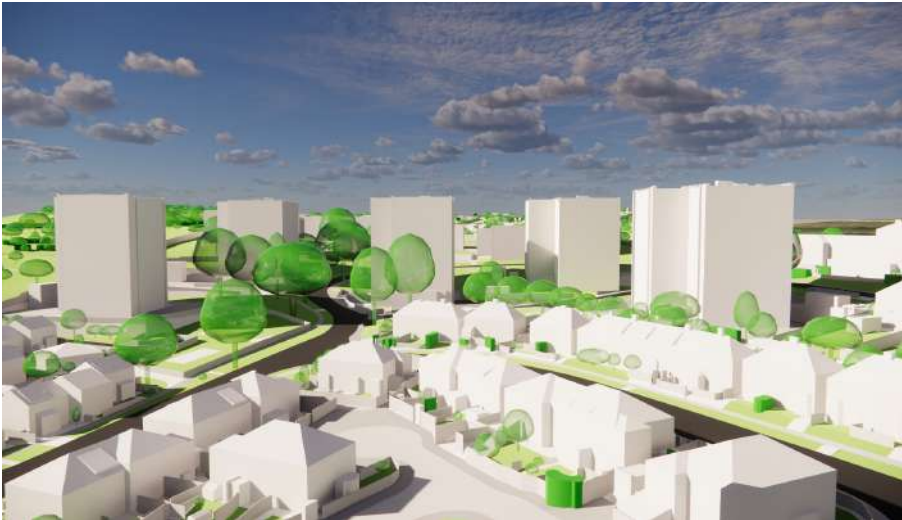
1 BED	34%
2 BED	46%
3 BED	20%
m4(3) - 26 UNITS	10%

Council brief (whitehawk)
1BED = 30%
2BED = 45%
3BED = 25%
M4(3) = 10%TOTAL

5.6. Existing and Proposed Wide Angle Views



View 1 Existing massing looking south



View 2 Existing massing looking north



PROPOSAL 1



PROPOSAL 1



PROPOSAL 2



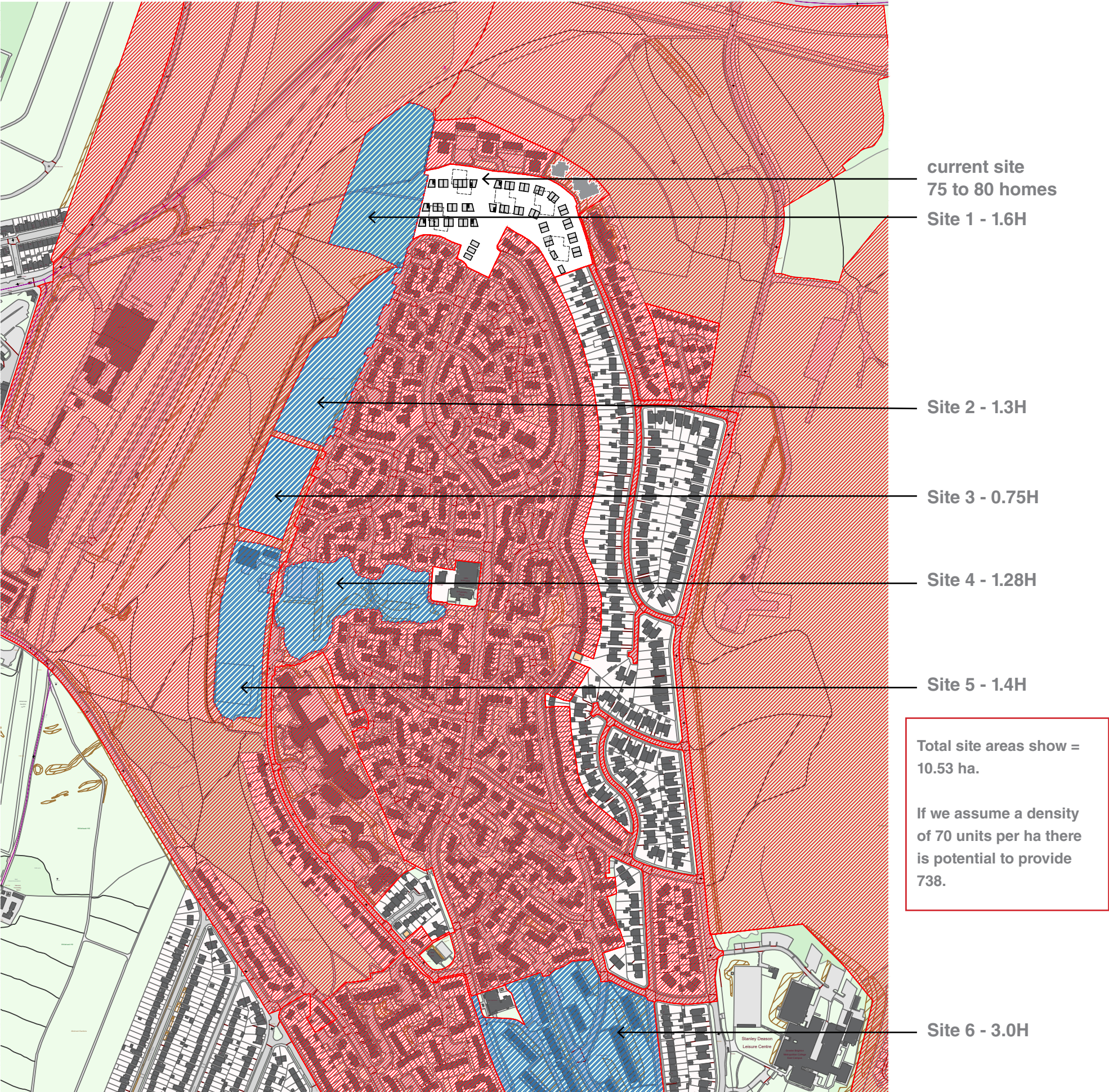
PROPOSAL 2

6.0 PROPOSAL 3

6.1. Wider Masterplan Idea

As part of the wider ideas masterplan for the BHCC landholdings this wider area does not form part of the initial red line boundary. However it should be acknowledged as an opportunity for longer term place making regenerating a large area. Any development of wider proposals and those within the current red line boundary will need to be explored with residents in numerous co-production workshops as the project progresses.

The sketch layout opposite identifies areas that could come forward for future regeneration and provide pockets of density across the entire BHCC landholdings within Whitehawk, enabling the red line boundary area to drop density and scale. This re-balancing of scale across Whitehawk could further reduce the feeling of being ‘cut off’ presently felt by residents in the high rise LPS blocks. The sketch proposes 2-3 storey housing across the redline boundary site and larger density opportunities further south into the vale of the Whitehawk bowl.



7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1. Summary

The emerging concept proposals for Whitehawk show how development has been informed by the Ideas and Site assessment undertaken to date.

Our key idea objectives for Whitehawk are set out below:

- 01 Creation of a new neighbourhood, defined by a locally distinctive aesthetic, and providing new sustainable homes fit for future living.
- 02 Recognition and promotion of the sustainable location of the Site, well placed close to local road, rail and bus links, and within walking and cycling distance of the Town Centre.
- 03 Promotion of a high quality environment and standard of living, which considers the needs of present and future generations.
- 04 Delivery of housing to meet local needs, including a mix of housing types and sizes.

- 05 Promotion of sustainable modes of transport and enhancing existing foot and cycle routes, promoting healthy living.
- 06 Provision of safe connections to education facilities, maintaining existing foot and cycle links.
- 07 Capitalise on the wealth of existing green capital, providing a multi-function green infrastructure that is easily accessible to all and improves ecological habitats where possible.
- 08 Provide recreation opportunities throughout the Site, including the provision of onsite natural play spaces, and SuDS to mitigate impacts of the development on the nearby areas.
- 09 Use best practice urban design principles to guide the creation of a safe, legible and vibrant new community.

7.2. Next Steps

The proposals for the development of north Whitehawk represent a significant and exciting opportunity to create a sustainable and impactful addition to the vibrant city of Brighton. The vision for this site is to deliver a high-quality, carefully designed development that will not only meet the current needs of the local community but also ensure that it can adapt to the evolving demands of future generations. By integrating environmentally conscious solutions with thoughtful design, the project aims to enhance the local environment and contribute positively to the area's growth and long-term sustainability.

BHCC is deeply committed to fostering a collaborative and transparent approach throughout the development process. BHCC understand the importance of engaging with the local community, and as such, we actively encourage and welcome participation from all relevant stakeholders.

Through ongoing dialogue, consultations, and feedback opportunities, we aim to ensure that the development aligns with the aspirations and needs of the people who live and work in the area. The team are dedicated to creating a space that truly reflects the community's values and contributes to its social, economic, and cultural fabric.

BHCC recognise that community input is crucial in shaping a project that will be sustainable, inclusive, and beneficial for years to come. The team looks forward to working alongside the local residents, businesses, and other key stakeholders to create a lasting positive impact in Whitehawk.

YOUR PLACE, YOUR FUTURE.

